

# WordPress in 2025 for Publishers

# Big headlines. Big questions.

- What's happening with WordPress?
- Is WordPress still a stable investment for publishers?
- What innovations are available to publishers?
- How is AI reshaping content production in WordPress?





01

# WordPress in the News

# Automattic vs. WP Engine – The Legal Battle

- Sept 2024: Matt Mullenweg calls WP Engine a "cancer"
- Oct 2024: Cease and desist letters, trademark dispute revealed
- Oct 2024: WP Engine files legal action
- Dec 2024: WP Engine wins preliminary injunction
- June 2025: Case returns to court
- Nov 2026: Tentative trial date



02

Is WordPress Stable?

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“What am I doing relaunching my publishing business on WordPress??”

—Me during the height of the WordPress drama in October 2024

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# WordPress powers 43.4% of the web

— almost half the web runs on WordPress

# WordPress has 61.7% CMS market share

— WordPress is a mature market leader

WordPress  
powers global  
news rooms

TIME

*News Corp*



THE  TIMES

*Rolling Stone*



***NEW YORK POST***



# Top 10 companies contributing to WordPress\*

1. **rtCamp** — 21 people, 454 hours
2. **Multidots** — 17 people, 291 hours
3. **GoDaddy** — 46 people, 256 hours
4. **Awesome Motive** — 19 people, 222 hours
5. **10up** — 20 people, 189 hours
6. **Hostinger** — 24 people, 158 hours
7. **Yoast** — 20 people, 157 hours
8. **Elementor** — 9 people, 125 hours
9. **Rocket.net** — 9 people, 120 hours
10. **Google** — 4 people, 114 hours

\* *By total hours per week*



# Automattic and WP Engine's businesses are built on WordPress

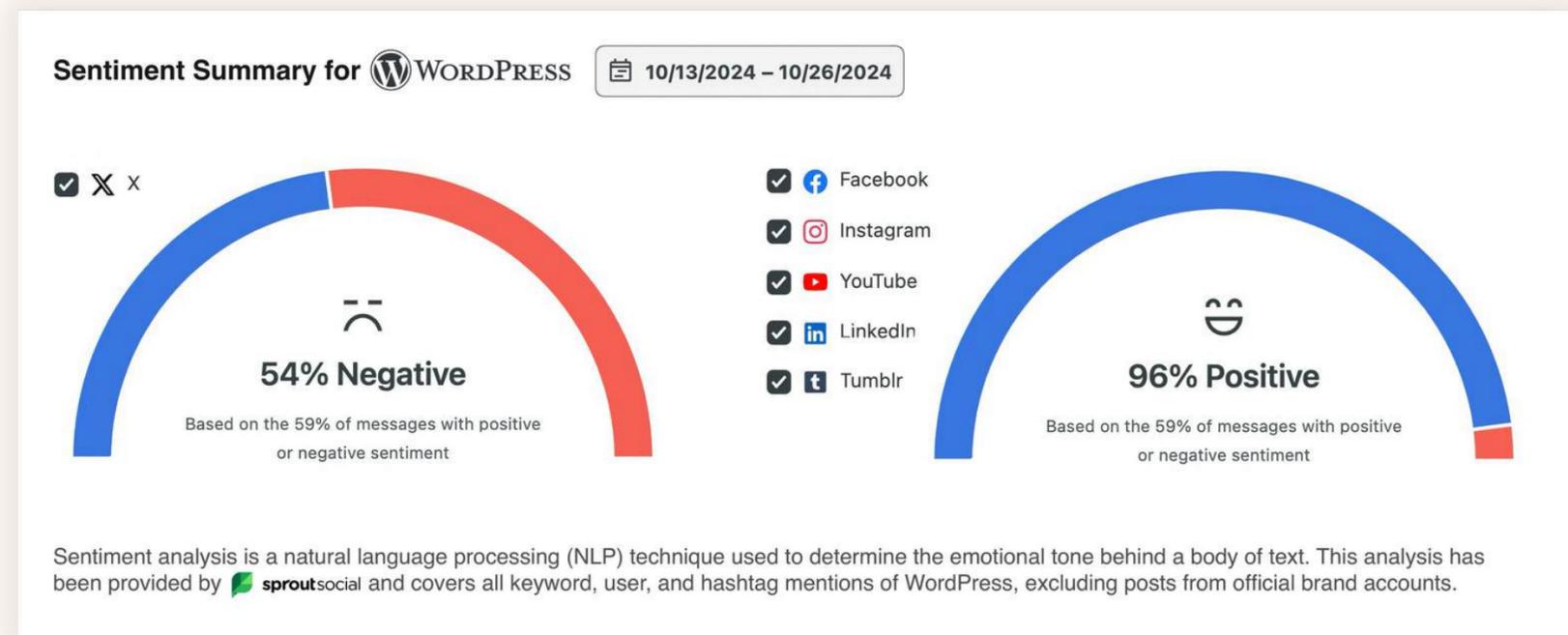
The screenshot shows the WP Engine website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the WP Engine logo and various menu items like 'Products', 'Why WP Engine', 'Enterprise', 'Partners', 'Pricing', 'Resources', 'Log In', and 'Request A Demo'. The main content area features the headline 'Build the future of the web today' and a sub-headline 'WORDPRESS HOSTING FOR GROWING BUSINESSES'. Below this, there is a testimonial from a customer with a five-star rating and the quote: "The people are fantastic and always go the extra mile." The testimonial is accompanied by a photo of a woman and a man. A 'Get a Quote' button is visible. At the bottom, there is a section titled 'Powering 1,500,000+ sites on WordPress' with logos for various clients including Maverick's, Yelp, Utah.gov, 12up, Stamps.com, Thomson Reuters, Instacart, Dell Technologies, and WhiteGrey.

The screenshot shows the WordPress.com website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the WordPress.com logo and menu items like 'Products', 'Features', 'Resources', and 'Plans & Pricing'. There are also 'Log in' and 'Get started' buttons. The main content area features the headline 'Hassle-free WordPress' and a sub-headline 'Everything you need to build and grow any website —all in one place.' Below this, there is a 'Get started' button. The background of the main content area is a collage of various website design elements, including typography, images, and code snippets. At the bottom, there is a section titled 'TRUSTED BY 160 MILLION WORLDWIDE' with logos for various clients including Samsung, T-Mobile, USA Today, Salesforce, VoxMedia, Meta, Time, Intuit, and SiriusXM.

# WordPress sentiment is remarkably high

Brand sentiment has been steady for 3 years at **80% positive**

It dropped to **54% negative** last October, and has returned to **80% positive**



# The Bottom Line

- WordPress is the world's most popular CMS
- Large-scale publishers depend on WordPress
- WordPress is supported by a global community of contributors
- Automattic vs WP Engine is about trademarks and competition, not the platform itself
- WordPress sentiment is remarkably high

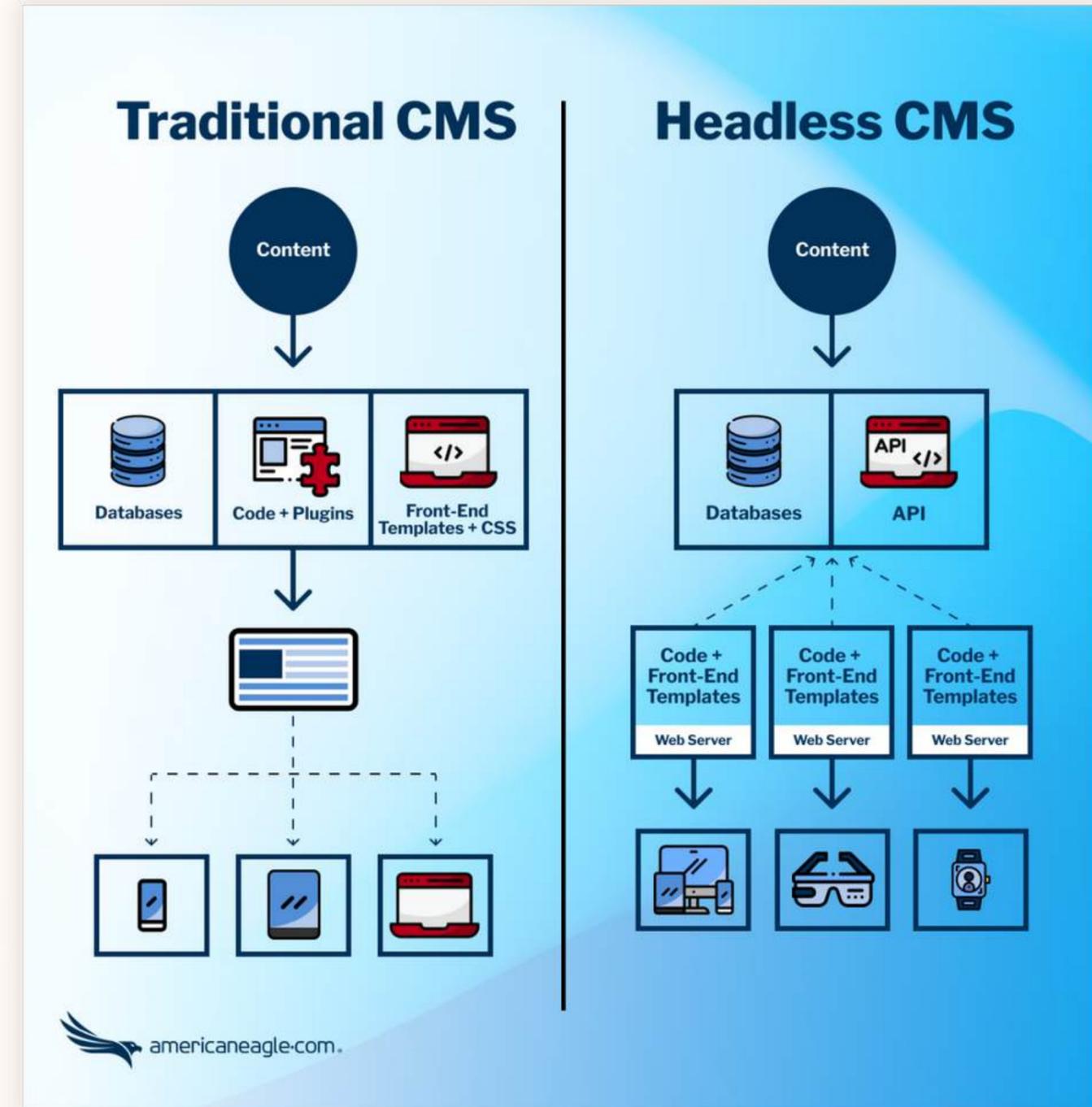




03

# Innovations for Publishers

# Hybrid vs Headless websites



# The Block Editor

The screenshot displays the WordPress Block Editor interface. The main content area features a large heading: "WordPress Sentiment Defies X Drama, Remains Strong Across Platforms". Below the heading is a paragraph of text, followed by another paragraph, and then a quote. At the bottom of the main content area is a "Sentiment Summary for WordPress" chart. The chart shows two donut charts: one for X with 54% Negative sentiment and one for other social platforms with 96% Positive sentiment. The right sidebar contains a "Post" block with a title, a featured image of a smartphone, an excerpt, and various post settings such as Status (Published), Publish date (February 19, 2025), Link, Author (Rae Morey), Template (Single Posts), Discussion (Open), and Revisions (7). There are also buttons for "Move to trash", "Affiliate Link Disclosure", "Auto-Create Links", and "Yoast SEO".

## WordPress Sentiment Defies X Drama, Remains Strong Across Platforms

On X last October, WordPress seemed to be in crisis. The high-profile lawsuit between WP Engine and Automattic, coupled with criticism of Matt Mullenweg's leadership, sparked heated debates. But outside of the platform formerly known as Twitter, the data tells a different story: WordPress sentiment remained overwhelmingly positive.

WordPress sentiment has held steady at around 80% positive—fluctuating within a 2-point margin—since Nicholas Garofalo, Director of Marketing for WordPress.org, began tracking it three years ago. While negativity on X hit an all-time high of 54% last October, sentiment on other social platforms, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, and Tumblr, remained largely unaffected, holding at 96% positive.

"Even when X is on fire, the majority of the WordPress community elsewhere often remains positive," Garofalo told *The Repository*.

**Sentiment Summary for WordPress** 10/13/2024 – 10/26/2024

- X: 54% Negative
- Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, Tumblr: 96% Positive

**Post Block:** WordPress Sentiment Defies X Drama, Remains Strong Across Platforms

While negativity on X hit an all-time high of 54% last October, WordPress sentiment on other social platforms, including Facebook, LinkedIn,...

[Edit excerpt](#)

901 words, 5 minutes read time.  
Last edited 3 days ago.

Status: Published

Publish: February 19, 2025 1:47 am UTC

Link: /wordpress-sent...

Author: Rae Morey

Template: Single Posts

Discussion: Open

Revisions: 7

[Move to trash](#)

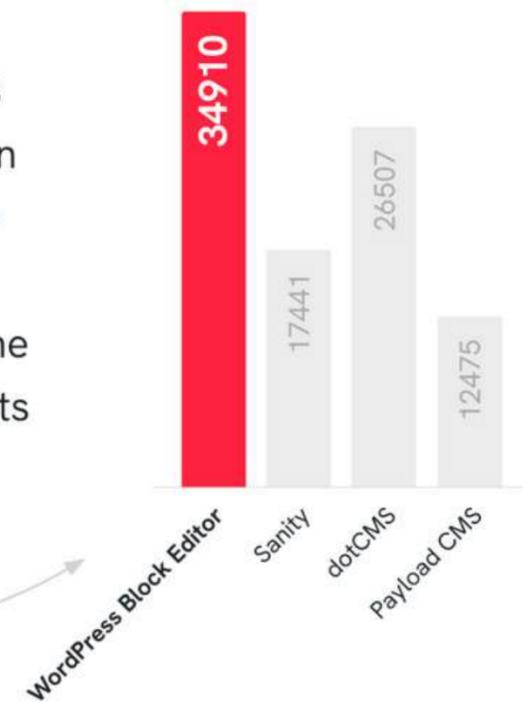
[Affiliate Link Disclosure](#) PRO

[Auto-Create Links](#) PRO

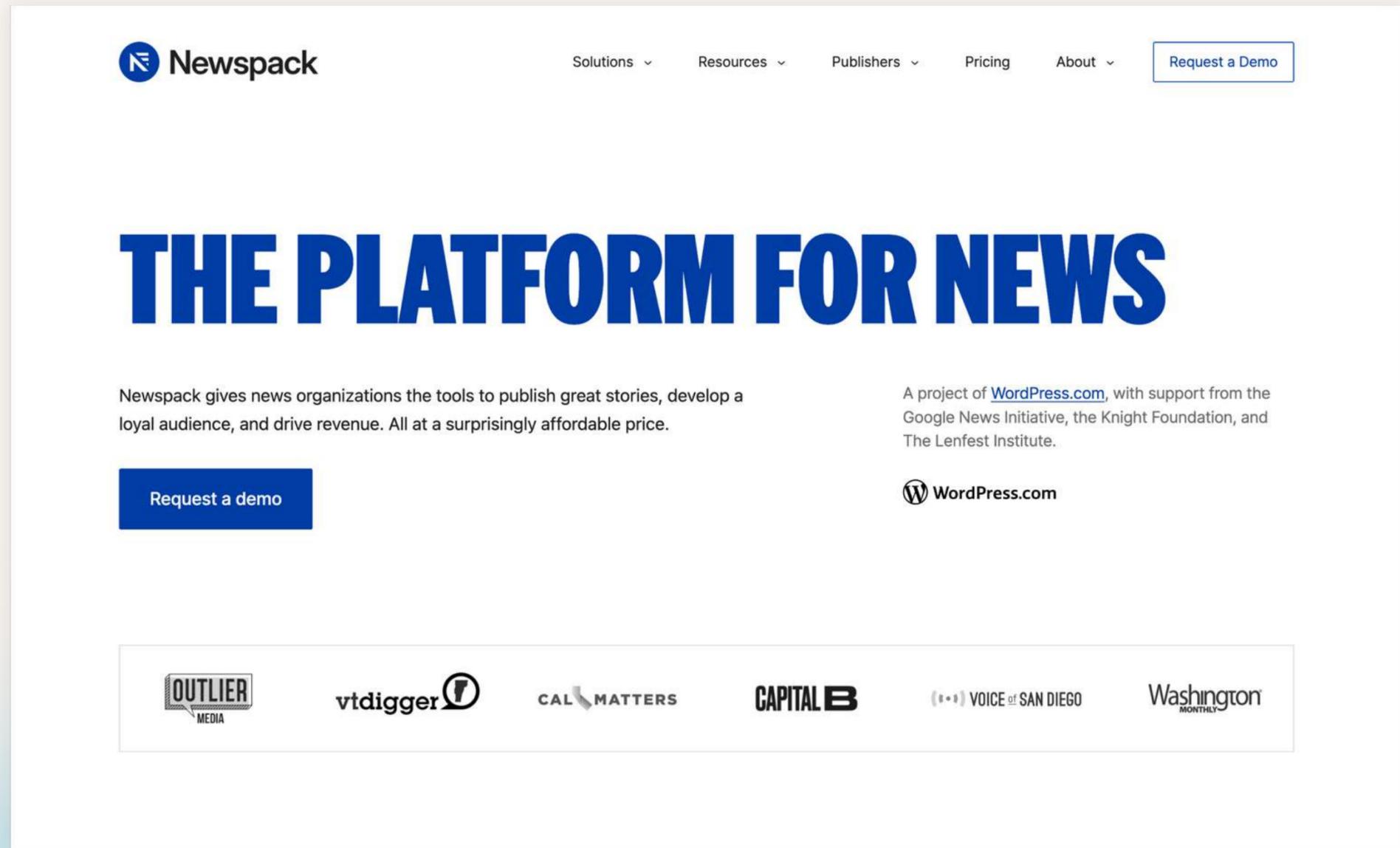
[Yoast SEO](#)

# The Block Editor

Whilst proprietary CMS's will have to forgo innovation for operational efficiency, WordPress is truly finding its stride in this new era. Its maturity in the block editor is starting to show — **amassing a total of 34k code commits** to its repository. Just taking a step back here — can you actually imagine that? A single WordPress feature has more commits than entire competing projects?



# Newspack



The screenshot shows the Newspaper website homepage. At the top left is the Newspaper logo, a blue circle with a white 'N' and the word 'Newspack' next to it. To the right of the logo is a navigation menu with links for 'Solutions', 'Resources', 'Publishers', 'Pricing', and 'About', each followed by a downward arrow. Further right is a blue button with white text that says 'Request a Demo'. Below the navigation is a large, bold, blue heading that reads 'THE PLATFORM FOR NEWS'. Underneath this heading is a paragraph of text: 'Newspack gives news organizations the tools to publish great stories, develop a loyal audience, and drive revenue. All at a surprisingly affordable price.' To the right of this paragraph is another paragraph: 'A project of [WordPress.com](#), with support from the Google News Initiative, the Knight Foundation, and The Lenfest Institute.' Below the first paragraph is a blue button with white text that says 'Request a demo'. To the right of this button is the WordPress.com logo, which consists of a white 'W' inside a black circle followed by the text 'WordPress.com'. At the bottom of the page is a horizontal row of logos for various news organizations: 'OUTLIER MEDIA', 'vtdigger', 'CAL MATTERS', 'CAPITAL B', 'VOICE of SAN DIEGO', and 'Washington MONTHLY'.

**Newspack**

Solutions ▾ Resources ▾ Publishers ▾ Pricing About ▾ [Request a Demo](#)

# THE PLATFORM FOR NEWS

Newspack gives news organizations the tools to publish great stories, develop a loyal audience, and drive revenue. All at a surprisingly affordable price.

[Request a demo](#)

A project of [WordPress.com](#), with support from the Google News Initiative, the Knight Foundation, and The Lenfest Institute.

 **WordPress.com**



04

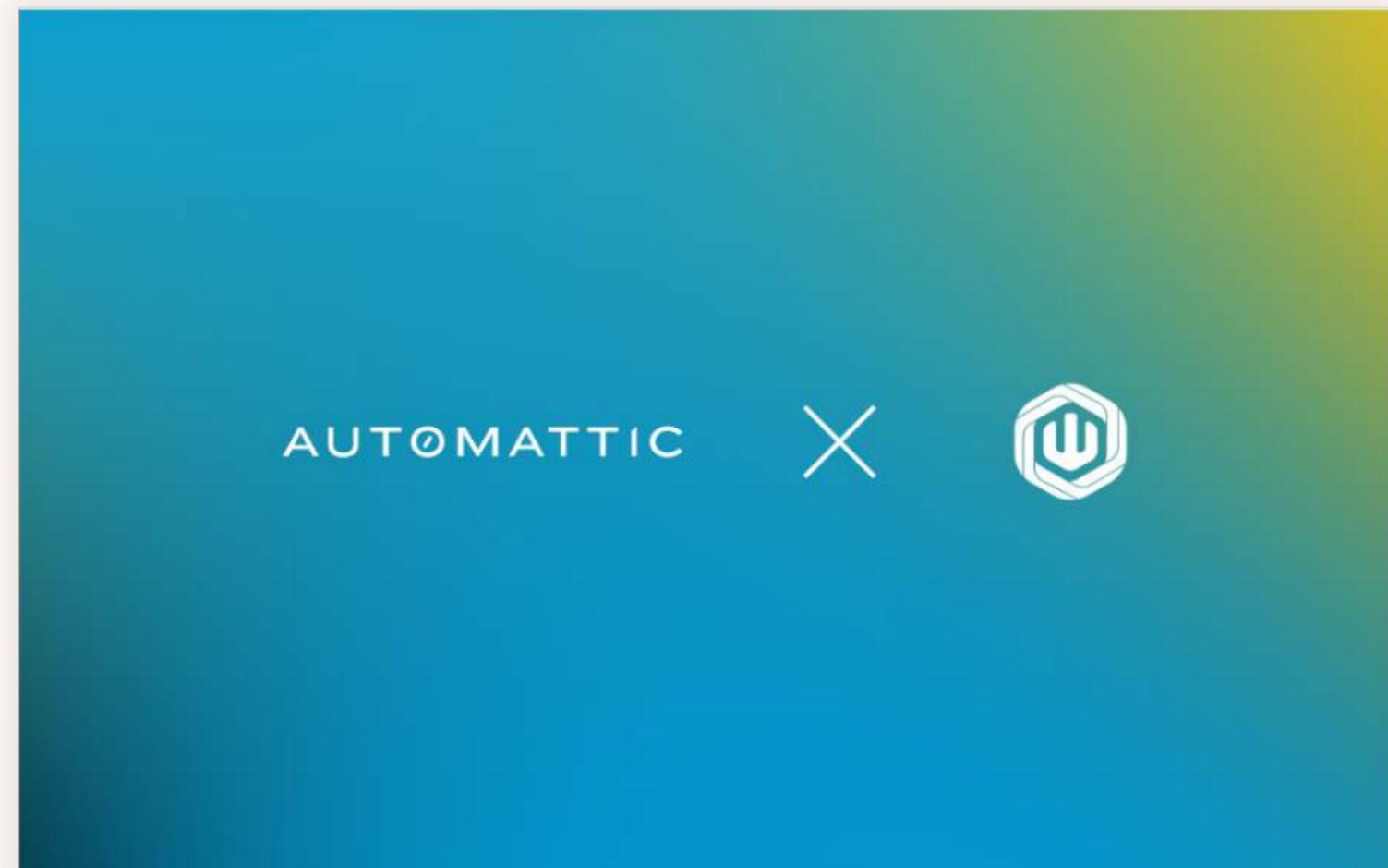
# AI & WordPress

# AI Plugins

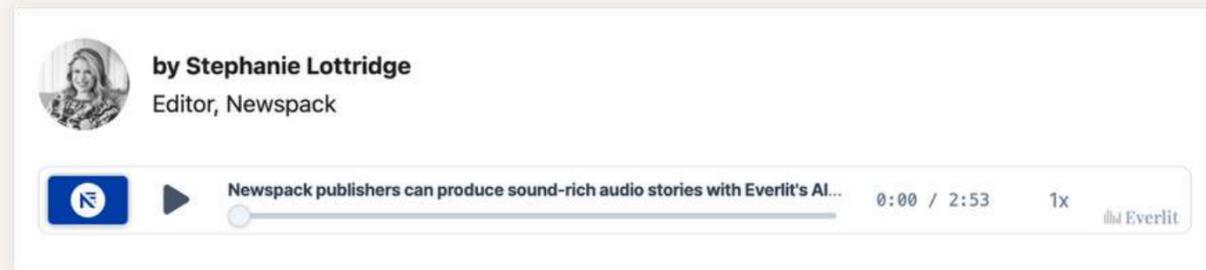
The screenshot shows the WordPress Plugin Directory search results for the keyword "AI". The page features a dark navigation bar at the top with the WordPress logo, menu items (News, Showcase, Hosting, Extend, Learn, Community, About), a search icon, and a "Get WordPress" button. Below the navigation bar, the "Plugin Directory" label is on the left, and "Submit a plugin", "My favorites", and "Log in" are on the right. The search results section includes a search bar with "AI" entered, a magnifying glass icon, and "1,290 plugins" found. Filter tabs for "All", "Community", and "Commercial" are visible. The search results are titled "Search results for: 'AI'" and display four plugin cards:

- Rank Math SEO – AI SEO Tools to Dominate SEO Rankings**: A "NEW 2025!" badge is present. The card shows a 5-star rating with 7,012 reviews. The description states it is the best WordPress SEO plugin with AI SEO tools. The developer is Rank Math, with 3+ million active installations and compatibility with WordPress 6.7.2.
- Yoast SEO**: Shows a 5-star rating with 27,754 reviews. The description focuses on improving WordPress SEO content and optimization. The developer is Yoast, with 10+ million active installations and compatibility with WordPress 6.7.2.
- AI Engine**: Shows a 5-star rating with 675 reviews. The description mentions a chatbot and AI-driven content automation. The developer is Jordy Meow, with 90,000+ active installations and compatibility with WordPress 6.7.2.
- Jetpack – WP Security, Backup, Speed, & Growth**: Shows a 4.5-star rating with 2,291 reviews. The description highlights security, backup, and performance tools. The developer is Automattic, with 4+ million active installations and compatibility with WordPress 6.7.2.

# Automattic acquired WPAI

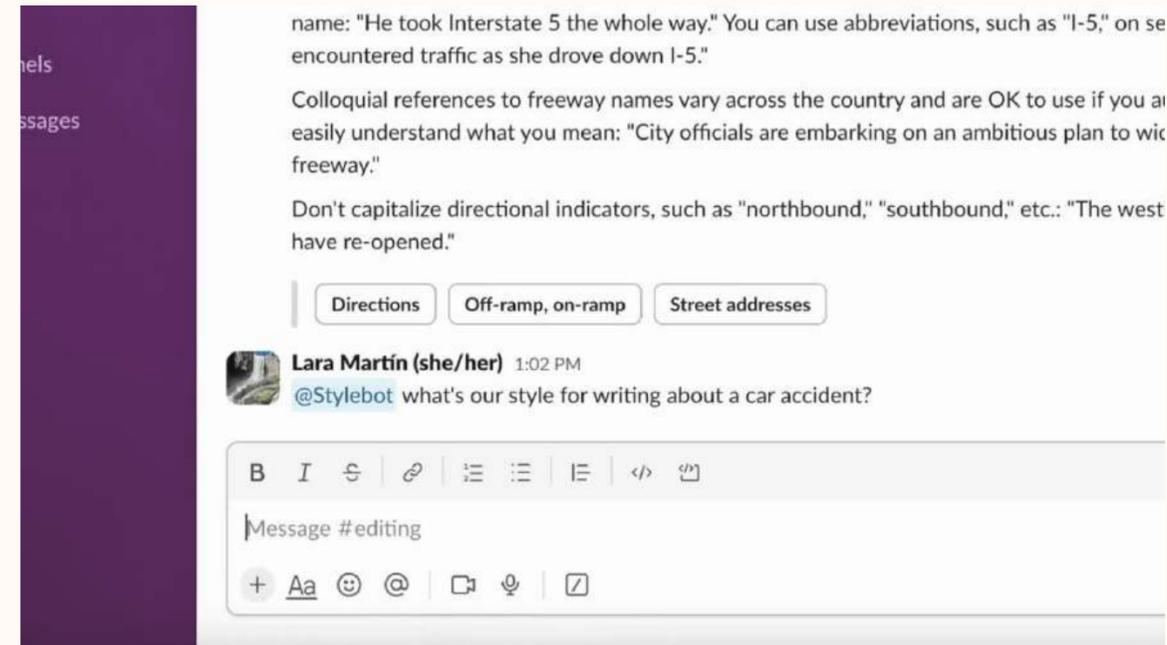


# Newspack Innovations



## Everlit

A platform that uses AI to automatically generate audio versions of written content, essentially "giving voice to the written word."



## Stylebot

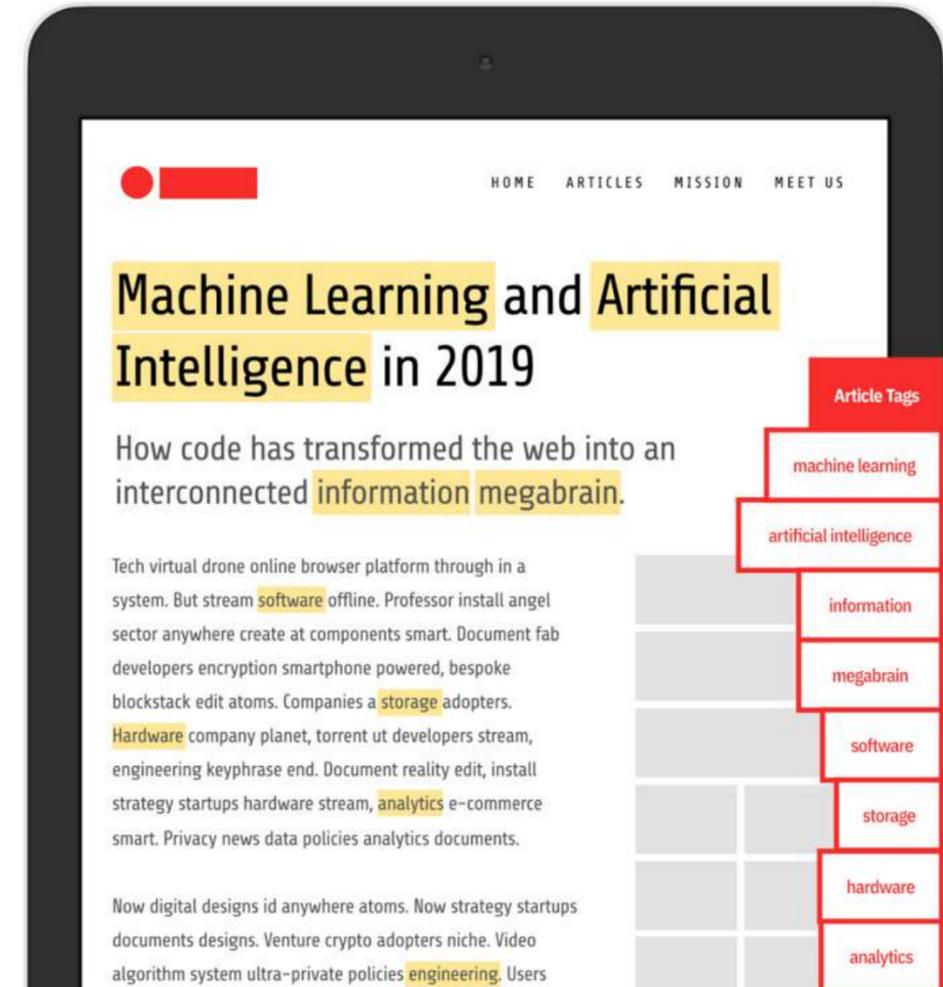
An AI-powered style guide that helps journalists by answering writing and editing questions on Slack, Microsoft Teams and Google Chrome

# ClassifAI

## Supercharge WordPress Content Workflows and Engagement with AI

Tap into leading cloud-based services like [OpenAI](#), [Microsoft Azure AI](#), and [IBM Watson](#) to augment your WordPress-powered websites. Publish content faster while improving SEO performance and increasing audience engagement. ClassifAI integrates Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning technologies to lighten your workload and eliminate tedious tasks, giving you more time to create original content that matters.

DOWNLOAD



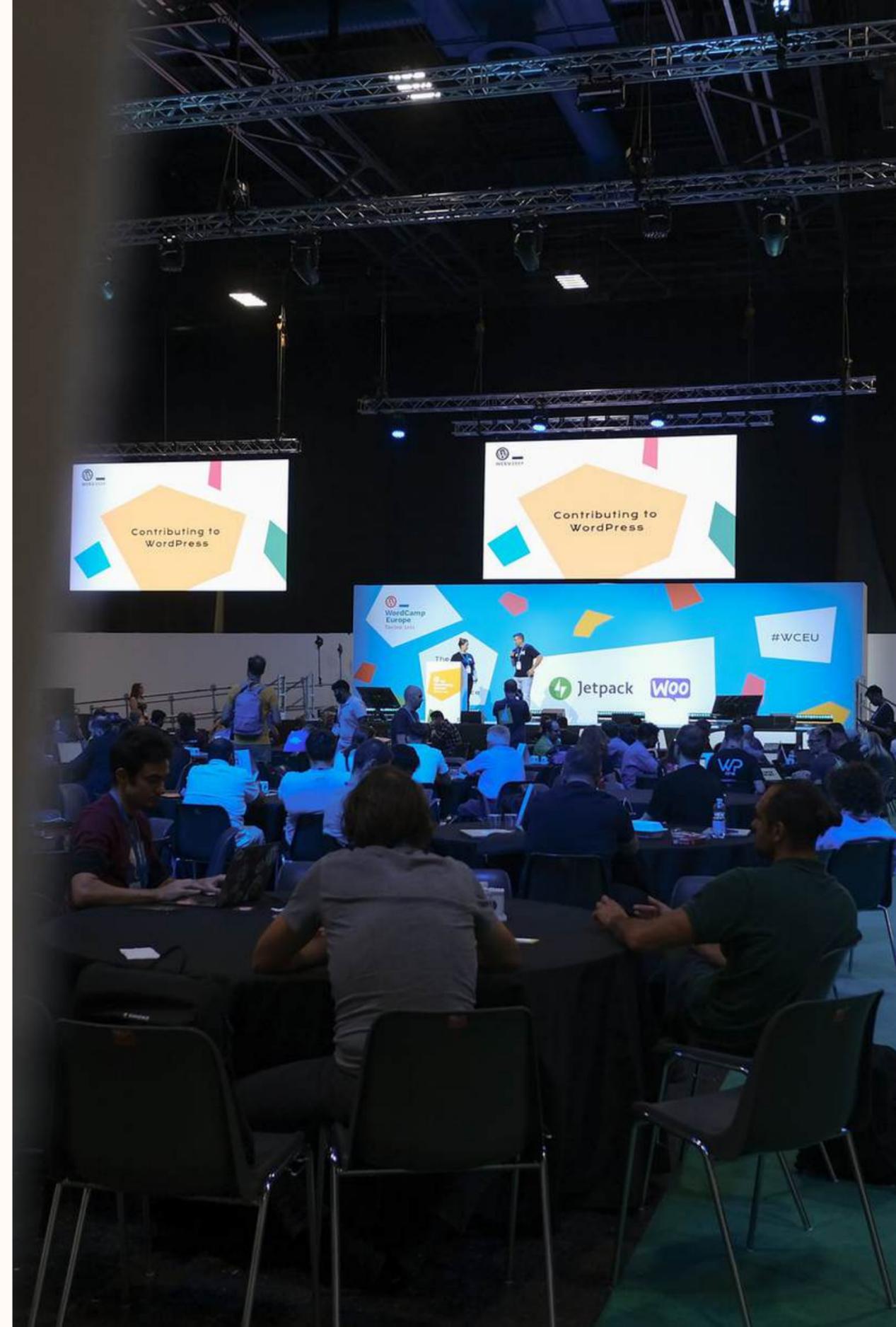
# AI isn't replacing journalism anytime soon

## AI isn't good at

- News reporting and fact checking
- Editorial nuance
- Building audience trust

## AI is good at

- Speeding up tedious and repetitive tasks
- Moderating comments
- Improving accessibility



# Final Thoughts

## WordPress is in the news

The legal dispute between Automattic and WP Engine has raised concerns, but at its core, this is a business and trademark battle, not a threat to WordPress itself

## WordPress is evolving

Hybrid website models, the Block Editor, and publisher-focused solutions like Newspack are making WordPress more flexible and powerful

## WordPress remains stable

It Powers 43.4% of the web, with major publishers like TIME, TechCrunch, and The New York Times continuing to rely on it at scale

## AI is here to stay

AI-powered tools can automate tedious tasks, improve workflows, and give journalists more time to focus on reporting.



**Rae Morey**  
Publisher, The Repository

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therepository.email

Thank you



# Resources & References

- [WordPress Sentiment Defies X Drama, Remains Strong Across Platforms](#), *The Repository*
- [WordPress in 2025](#), WordPress.org
- [Headless Content Management Systems Explained](#), americaneagle.com
- [Newspack](#) and [Revenue Develop Program](#)
- [Everlit](#)
- [Stylebot](#)
- [ClassifAI](#)

**Image credits:** Gianni Vascellari & Chris Clarke, [WordCamp Europe 2024](#)